

CLAIMS

WE CLAIM:

1. An information bearing instrument, comprising:

a first information region; and

a second information region,

wherein one or more entries corresponding to a format of a predetermined lottery are provided in at least one of said first information region and said second information region, each entry including a plurality of random numbers;

wherein activation information for activating said information bearing instrument is provided in at least one of said first information region and said second information region,

wherein activation of said information bearing instrument using said activation information is a prerequisite to playing said one or more entries in said lottery, and

wherein redemption information for redeeming said information bearing instrument for a prize if any of said one more entries played in said lottery is determined to be a winning entry is provided in at least one of said first information region and said second information region.

2. A prepaid wagering card, comprising:

a first side; and

a second side,

wherein one or more entries corresponding to a format of a predetermined lottery are provided on at least one of said first side and said second side, each entry including a plurality of random numbers;

wherein activation information for activating said prepaid wagering card is provided on at least one of said first side and said second side,

wherein activation of said prepaid wagering card using said activation information is a prerequisite to playing said one or more entries in said lottery, and

wherein redemption information for redeeming said prepaid wagering card for a prize if any of said one more entries played in said lottery is determined to be a winning entry is provided on at least one of said first side and said second side.

3. A prepaid wagering card according to claim 2, wherein timing information, which represents a predetermined period of time for which said prepaid wagering card is valid, is provided on at least one of said first side and said second side; and

wherein said predetermined period of time begins upon activation of said prepaid wagering card.

4. A prepaid wagering card according to claim 2, wherein a card control number is provided on at least one of said first side and said second side,

said card control number includes information on a date of manufacture of the prepaid wagering card.

5. A prepaid wagering card according to claim 2, wherein identification information, which uniquely identifies said prepaid wagering card, is provided on at least one of said first side and said second side.

6. A prepaid wagering card according to claim 5, wherein said identification information includes a card serial number and a PIN.

7. A prepaid wagering card according to claim 2, wherein said activation information is provided in a machine-readable form.

8. A prepaid wagering card according to claim 7, wherein said machine-readable form includes at least one of a bar code and a magnetic strip.

9. A prepaid wagering card according to claim 8, wherein said activation information is readable by a reading device other than a lottery-specific terminal.

10. A prepaid wagering card according to claim 7, wherein said activation information is encrypted.

11. A prepaid wagering card according to claim 2, wherein said redemption information is provided in a machine-readable form.

12. A prepaid wagering card according to claim 11, wherein said machine-readable form includes at least one of a bar code and a magnetic strip.

13. A prepaid wagering card according to claim 12, wherein said redemption information is readable by a reading device other than a lottery-specific terminal.

14. A prepaid wagering card according to claim 11, wherein said redemption information is encrypted.

15. A prepaid wagering card according to claim 2, wherein one or more designated areas for player information are provided on at least one of said first side and said second side.

16. A prepaid wagering card according to claim 15, wherein said player information includes a name, an address, a telephone number and a signature.

17. A prepaid wagering card according to claim 15, wherein said player information is not placed on said prepaid wagering card until after activation of said prepaid wagering card.

18. A prepaid wagering card according to claim 2, wherein a designated area for a confirmation number is provided on at least one of said first side and said second side, said confirmation number being provided upon wagering of said one or more entries.

19. A prepaid wagering card according to claim 2, wherein promotional information is provided on at least one of said first side and said second side.

20. A prepaid wagering card according to claim 2, wherein instructional information is provided on at least one of said first side and said second side.

21. A prepaid wagering card according to claim 20, wherein said instructional information includes at least one of information on activating said prepaid wagering card, information on wagering with said prepaid wagering card and information on redeeming said prepaid wagering.

22. A prepaid wagering card according to claim 2, wherein said predetermined lottery is identified on said prepaid wagering card.

23. A prepaid wagering card according to claim 2, wherein the dimensions of said prepaid wagering card are substantially equivalent to the dimensions of a credit card.

24. A prepaid wagering card package comprising a plurality of prepaid wagering cards according to claim 2.

25. A prepaid wagering card package according to claim 24, wherein each of said plurality of prepaid wagering cards is uniquely identifiable by card identification information included thereon, and

wherein each of said plurality of prepaid wagering cards can be wagered independently of the other prepaid wagering cards.

26. A method for preparing prepaid wagering cards, comprising:
generating a plurality of random numbers; and
generating a plurality of prepaid wagering cards, each prepaid wagering card having one or more entries corresponding to a format of a predetermined lottery, each of said one or more entries including a plurality of said random numbers,

wherein the entries of a particular prepaid wagering card are not limited to a predetermined drawing of the predetermined lottery.

27. The method for preparing prepaid wagering cards of claim 26, further comprising storing information associated with each prepaid wagering card in a database.

28. The method for preparing prepaid wagering cards of claim 27, wherein said information includes identifying information for uniquely identifying each corresponding prepaid wagering card.

29. The method of preparing prepaid wagering cards of claim 26, further comprising:

grouping a plurality of the prepaid wagering cards to form a set; and
storing information associated with the set in a database.

30. A method for activating a prepaid wagering card of claim 27, comprising:

determining whether the prepaid wagering card is being activated at a traditional lottery retailer having a dedicated lottery sales terminal or a non-traditional lottery retailer having a general sales terminal;

if the prepaid wagering card is being activated at the traditional lottery retailer:

the dedicated lottery sales terminal reads card information on the prepaid wagering card to be purchased and forwards the card information to a prepaid wagering system;

the prepaid wagering system uses the card information to update the information for the prepaid wagering card in the database; and

the prepaid wagering system sends an acknowledgement to the lottery sales terminal indicating that the prepaid wagering card is activated;

if the prepaid wagering card is being activated at the non-traditional lottery retailer:

the general sales terminal reads card information on the prepaid wagering card to be purchased and forwards the card information to the prepaid wagering system;

the prepaid wagering system uses the card information to update the information for the prepaid wagering card in the database; and

the prepaid wagering system sends an acknowledgement to the general sales terminal indicating that the prepaid wagering card is activated.

31. The method for activating a prepaid wagering card of claim 30, wherein one or more wagers based on the prepaid wagering card are processed in a same transaction as the activating of the prepaid wagering card.

32. The method for activating a prepaid wagering card of claim 30, further comprising:

if the prepaid wagering card is being activated at the traditional lottery retailer, the prepaid wagering system stores first sales information on a sales transaction of the prepaid wagering card in the data; and

if the prepaid wagering card is being activated at the non-traditional lottery retailer, the prepaid wagering system stores second sales information on a sales transaction of the prepaid wagering card in the database.

33. The method for activating a prepaid wagering card of claim 32, wherein the first sales information and the second sales information are the same.

34. The method for activating a prepaid wagering card of claim 32, wherein the first sales information includes at least one of a time the prepaid wagering card was sold, a date the prepaid wagering card was sold, and information uniquely identifying a location at which the prepaid wagering card was sold.

35. The method for activating a prepaid wagering card of claim 32, wherein the second sales information includes at least one of a time the prepaid wagering card was sold, a date the prepaid wagering card was sold, and information uniquely identifying a location at which the prepaid wagering card was sold.

36. The method for activating a prepaid wagering card of claim 30, wherein the general sales terminal is a point-of-sale (POS) terminal.

37. A method for activating and wagering a prepaid wagering card of claim 27, comprising:

determining whether the prepaid wagering card is being activated and wagered at a traditional lottery retailer having a dedicated lottery sales terminal or a non-traditional lottery retailer having a general sales terminal;

if the prepaid wagering card is being activated and wagered at the traditional lottery retailer:

the dedicated lottery sales terminal reads card information on the prepaid wagering card to be purchased and wagered and forwards the card information to a prepaid wagering system;

the prepaid wagering system uses the card information to update the information for the prepaid wagering card in the database; and

the prepaid wagering system sends an acknowledgement to the lottery sales terminal indicating that the prepaid wagering card is activated and wagered;

if the prepaid wagering card is being activated and wagered at the non-traditional lottery retailer:

the general sales terminal reads card information on the prepaid wagering card to be purchased and wagered and forwards the card information to the prepaid wagering system;

the prepaid wagering system uses the card information to update the information for the prepaid wagering card in the database; and

the prepaid wagering system sends an acknowledgement to the general sales terminal indicating that the prepaid wagering card is activated and wagered.

38. A method of wagering a prepaid wagering card of claim 30, comprising:

establishing a first communications link between a cardholder and the prepaid wagering system;

submitting card information on the prepaid wagering card to be wagered to the prepaid wagering system via the first communications link;

verifying the validity of the prepaid wagering card;

if the validity of the prepaid wagering card is verified:

submitting first wager data to the prepaid wagering system via the first communications link;

transmitting the first wager data from the prepaid wagering system to a lottery system via a second communications link established between the prepaid wagering system and the lottery system;

registering one or more entries included in the first wager data for a scheduled lottery drawing;

transmitting second wager data from the lottery system to the prepaid wagering system via the second communications link;

storing the second wager data in the database; and

transmitting a wager confirmation from the prepaid wagering system to the cardholder via the first communications link.

39. The method of wagering a prepaid wagering card of claim 38, wherein said first communications link and said second communications link are the same.

40. The method of wagering a prepaid wagering card of claim 38, wherein at least one of said first communications link and said second communications link is the Internet.

41. The method of wagering a prepaid wagering card of claim 38, wherein said first communications link is a telephone line.

42. The method of wagering a prepaid wagering card of claim 38, further comprising prompting the cardholder to submit at least one of the card information and the first wager data.

43. The method of wagering a prepaid wagering card of claim 42, wherein an interactive voice response (IVR) system prompts the cardholder.

44. The method for prepaid wagering according to claim 38, wherein verifying the validity of the prepaid wagering card includes

verifying that a predetermined period of time, which represents a usable time period of the prepaid wagering card as measured from its activation, has not lapsed.

45. The method for prepaid wagering according to claim 38, wherein the prepaid wagering card is operable to be wagered at an arbitrary time after activation of the prepaid wagering card.

46. The method for prepaid wagering according to claim 44, wherein the prepaid wagering card is operable to be wagered at any time within said predetermined period of time.

47. A method for redeeming a prepaid wagering card of claim 38, comprising:

determining whether the prepaid wagering card is being redeemed at the traditional lottery retailer having the dedicated lottery sales terminal or the non-traditional lottery retailer having the general sales terminal;

if the prepaid wagering card is being redeemed at the traditional lottery retailer:

the dedicated lottery sales terminal reads card information on the prepaid wagering card to be redeemed and forwards the card information to the prepaid wagering system;

the prepaid wagering system uses the card information to update the information for the prepaid wagering card in the database; and

the prepaid wagering system sends redemption information to the lottery sales terminal indicating whether the prepaid wagering card is a winning card;

if the prepaid wagering card is being redeemed at the non-traditional lottery retailer:

the general sales terminal reads card information on the prepaid wagering card to be redeemed and forwards the card information to the prepaid wagering system;

the prepaid wagering system uses the card information to update the information for the prepaid wagering card in the database; and

the prepaid wagering system sends redemption information to the general sales terminal indicating whether the prepaid wagering card is a winning card.

48. A method for activating a prepaid wagering card, comprising:

determining whether the prepaid wagering card is being activated at a traditional lottery retailer having a dedicated lottery sales terminal or a non-traditional lottery retailer having a general sales terminal;

if the prepaid wagering card is being activated at the traditional lottery retailer:

the dedicated lottery sales terminal reads card information on the prepaid wagering card to be purchased and forwards the card information to a prepaid wagering system;

the prepaid wagering system uses the card information to update the information for the prepaid wagering card in a database; and

the prepaid wagering system sends an acknowledgement to the lottery sales terminal indicating that the prepaid wagering card is activated;

if the prepaid wagering card is being activated at the non-traditional lottery retailer:

the general sales terminal reads card information on the prepaid wagering card to be purchased and forwards the card information to the prepaid wagering system;

the prepaid wagering system uses the card information to update the information for the prepaid wagering card in the database; and

the prepaid wagering system sends an acknowledgement to the general sales terminal indicating that the prepaid wagering card is activated.

49. A method for activating and wagering a prepaid wagering card, comprising:

determining whether the prepaid wagering card is being activated and wagered at a traditional lottery retailer having a dedicated lottery sales terminal or a non-traditional lottery retailer having a general sales terminal;

if the prepaid wagering card is being activated and wagered at the traditional lottery retailer:

the dedicated lottery sales terminal reads card information on the prepaid wagering card to be purchased and wagered and forwards the card information to a prepaid wagering system;

the prepaid wagering system uses the card information to update the information for the prepaid wagering card in a database; and

the prepaid wagering system sends an acknowledgement to the lottery sales terminal indicating that the prepaid wagering card is activated and wagered;

if the prepaid wagering card is being activated and wagered at the non-traditional lottery retailer:

the general sales terminal reads card information on the prepaid wagering card to be purchased and wagered and forwards the card information to the prepaid wagering system;

the prepaid wagering system uses the card information to update the information for the prepaid wagering card in the database; and

the prepaid wagering system sends an acknowledgement to the general sales terminal indicating that the prepaid wagering card is activated and wagered.

50. A method for activating a prepaid wagering card at a non-traditional lottery retailer using a general sales terminal, comprising:

the general sales terminal reads card information on the prepaid wagering card to be purchased and forwards the card information to the prepaid wagering system;

the prepaid wagering system uses the card information to update the information for the prepaid wagering card in the database; and

the prepaid wagering system sends an acknowledgement to the general sales terminal indicating that the prepaid wagering card is activated.

51. A method of wagering a prepaid wagering card, comprising:

establishing a first communications link between a cardholder and a prepaid wagering system;

submitting card information on the prepaid wagering card to be wagered to the prepaid wagering system via the first communications link;

verifying the validity of the prepaid wagering card;

if the validity of the prepaid wagering card is verified:

submitting first wager data to the prepaid wagering system via the first communications link;

transmitting the first wager data from the prepaid wagering system to a lottery system via a second communications link established between the prepaid wagering system and the lottery system;

registering one or more entries included in the first wager data for a scheduled lottery drawing;

transmitting second wager data from the lottery system to the prepaid wagering system via the second communications link;

storing the second wager data in the database; and

transmitting a wager confirmation from the prepaid wagering system to the cardholder via the first communications link.

52. The method for prepaid wagering according to claim 51, wherein the cardholder can wager the card at a time of the cardholder's choosing.

53. A method for redeeming a prepaid wagering card, comprising:
determining whether the prepaid wagering card is being redeemed at a traditional lottery retailer having a dedicated lottery sales terminal or a non-traditional lottery retailer having a general sales terminal;

if the prepaid wagering card is being redeemed at the traditional lottery retailer:

the dedicated lottery sales terminal reads card information on the prepaid wagering card to be redeemed and forwards the card information to a prepaid wagering system;

the prepaid wagering system uses the card information to update the information for the prepaid wagering card in a database; and

the prepaid wagering system sends redemption information to the lottery sales terminal indicating whether the prepaid wagering card is a winning card;

if the prepaid wagering card is being redeemed at the non-traditional lottery retailer:

the general sales terminal reads card information on the prepaid wagering card to be redeemed and forwards the card information to the prepaid wagering system;

the prepaid wagering system uses the card information to update the information for the prepaid wagering card in the database; and

the prepaid wagering system sends redemption information to the general sales terminal indicating whether the prepaid wagering card is a winning card.

54. A system for prepaid wagering, comprising:

a data store; the data store storing a plurality of random numbers of a prepaid wagering medium, identifying information for uniquely identifying the prepaid wagering medium and status information for identifying a status of the prepaid wagering medium;

a data processor, the data processor capable of accessing the data store;

wherein after the prepaid wagering medium is purchased, the data processor receives purchase information on the prepaid wagering medium, and upon receipt of the purchase information, the data processor:

accesses the data store,

changes the status information from a first status, which was set at manufacture, to a second status corresponding to the activation of the prepaid wagering medium, and

stores the date of purchase of the prepaid wagering medium as an activation date of the prepaid wagering medium in the data store;

wherein a player wanting to wager the random numbers associated with the prepaid wagering card establishes a communications session with the data processor;

wherein during the communications session, the player provides the identifying information on the prepaid wagering medium;

wherein upon receipt of the identifying information from the player, the data processor determines whether the prepaid wagering medium has expired;

if the data processor determines that the prepaid wagering medium has expired:

the player is informed that the random numbers associated with the prepaid wagering card cannot be wagered; and

the status information is set to a third status, corresponding to the expiration of the prepaid wagering medium;

if the data processor determines that the prepaid wagering medium has not expired:

the data processor forwards the random numbers associated with the prepaid wagering card to a lottery server,

the lottery server registers the random numbers for a next scheduled drawing; and

the data processor provides confirmation information to the player, the confirmation information confirming that the random numbers will be played in the next scheduled drawing.

55. The system for prepaid wagering according to claim 54, wherein upon receipt of the identifying information from the player, the data processor uses at least one of the activation date of the prepaid wagering medium and the status information to determine whether the prepaid wagering medium has expired.

56. The system for prepaid wagering according to claim 54, wherein the prepaid wagering medium includes redemption information for redeeming the prepaid wagering medium for a prize if the prepaid wagering medium is a winner in the next scheduled drawing, and

wherein the redemption information is stored in the data store.

57. The system for prepaid wagering according to claim 54, wherein the redemption information includes the confirmation information.

58. The system for prepaid wagering according to claim 54, further comprising a random-number generator for generating the plurality of random numbers.

59. The system for prepaid wagering according to claim 54, wherein the purchase information is captured by the lottery server by polling a point-of-sale (POS) terminal of a seller of the prepaid wagering medium.

60. The system for prepaid wagering according to claim 54, wherein after the prepaid wagering medium is purchased, the purchase information is captured by the lottery server and is transmitted by the lottery server to the data processor.

61. A system for prepaid wagering according to claim 54, further comprising an interactive voice response (IVR) system,

wherein the IVR system is used during the communications session between the data processor and the player.